

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0330

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USDEL PEKING

CINCPAC

S E C R E T JAKARTA 11540

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CH

SUBJECT: THE YELLOW PERIL (PHASE II)

REF: A. MANILA 12240 B. TOKYO 12347 C. MANILA 12466 D. TAIPEI 5811

1. AS NEWCOMER TO ASIA WITH BACKGROUND IN OTHER HETERO-
GENEOUS PARTS OF WORLD, I FIND THESIS IN YELLOW PERIL
(II) SOMEWHAT SURPRISING.

2. IT IS PERHAPS NATURAL THT IN EAST ASIA, WHERE WE
HAVE BEEN FOR SO MANY YEARS PSYCHOLOGICALLY CONDITIONED
TO DOMINANT ROLE, WE SHOULD FEEL UNCERTAIN AS NATIONS
SEEK TO LESSEN THEIR DEPENDENCE ON US. WE HAVE BEEN

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THROUGH THIS ELSEWHERE AND HAVE SURVIVED. I FIND IT

DIFFICULT BELIEVE WE CAN ONLY PROTECT OUR INTERESTS IN ASIA BY COMING TO UNDERSTANDING WITH CHINA.

3. MANILA'S CABLE APPEARS TO BE BASED ON PREMISE THAT OUR FUTURE IN ASIA IS NECESSARILY BOUND UP WITH NATURE OF INTERNAL REGIMES AND THAT WE CAN ONLY SUCCEED IF SCENARIO FOLLOWS OUR PATTERN. I FIND THESE ASSUMPTIONS QUESTIONABLE.

4. THERE IS ALSO ASSUMPTION THAT OUR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE IS TO KEEP PEACE AND THAT IF THIS CAN BE INSURED BY CHINA, WE NO LONGER NEED TO BE INVOLVED. PRESUMABLY FOR MANY YEARS TO COME WE WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE INTERESTS OF OUR OWN. WE WILL NEED ACCESS TO RESOURCES. UNLESS MIRACLE HAPPENS IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH USSR, WE WILL NEED TO BALANCE DEPLOYED SOVIET FORCES AND TO INSURE OUR OWN SECURITY IN PACIFIC. CAN WE NOT ASSUME THAT U.S., DESPITE CHANGES IN NATIONAL MOOD, WILL STILL PROVIDE RESOURCES FOR AMERICAN ROLE AND EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES?

5. ELSEWHERE IN WORLD (EXCEPT IN NATO) WE HAVE COME MORE AND MORE TO SEE PROTECTION OF OUR INTERESTS LIES IN MAINTAINING MAXIMUM OF FLEXIBILITY AND MINIMIZING STRONG IDENTIFICATION WITH ANY POWER OR GROUPING IN AREA. YELLOW PERIL II SEEMS TO BE MIXING QUESTION OF POLITICAL DOMINANCE IN EAST ASIA WITH QUESTION OF INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT IN EACH NATION. TWO ARE NOT NECESSARILY MIXED.

6. ON "HEGEMONY" IT SEEMS PREMATURE TO CONCLUDE, WITH JAPAN AND SOVIET UNION STILL IN GAME AND HANOI STILL BALANCING, THAT CHINA WILL NECESSARILY EMERGE AS DOMINANT POWER. THIS ALSO UNDERESTIMATES ABILITY OF INDEPENDENT STATES, EVEN WHERE WEAK, TO MAINTAIN FREEDOM OF ACTION. WE HAVE FREQUENTLY, IN OTHER AREAS OF WORLD, PUT STATES "IRRETRIEVABLY" IN COMMUNIST ORBIT, ONLY TO FIND THAT,

WHERE THEY HAVE NOT BEEN MILITARILY CONQUERED, THEY SHOW REMARKABLE ABILITY TO WRIGGLE OUT OF EMBRACE. NATIONAL FEELINGS CONTINUE TO BE STRONG. WE PRESUME THIS WILL BE TRUE IN ASIA. WE DO NOT SEE CHINESE HAVING SECRET

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CAPABILITY OR FREEDOM OF ACTION MILITARILY TO CONQUER ISLAND STATES OF EAST ASIA.

7. QUESTION OF WHICH MODEL EAST ASIAN STATES WILL ADOPT IN FACE GIGANTIC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IS SEPARATE ISSUE. STATES CONCEIVABLY COULD SUCCUMB, AS INDONESIA ALMOST DID, TO SUBVERSIVE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT AND HAVE CHINESE OR HANOI MODEL IMPOSED. INTERNAL FRUSTRATIONS WITH SLOW

DEVELOPMENT COULD ALSO LEAD TO AUTHORITARIAN MILITARY REGIME OR EXHORTATIVE NATIONALISM OF SUKARNO MODE. WE HAVE NOW DISCOVERED IN ASIA, AS WE HAVE ALREADY ELSEWHERE, HOW EXTREMELY LIMITED IS OUR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE INTERNAL COURSE OF ANOTHER NATION. DEVELOPMENTS CONTRARY TO OUR SCENARIO IN ASIA CAN CAUSE DIFFICULTIES FOR US IN BILATERAL RELATIONS; THEY DO NOT NECESSARILY MEAN END OF RELATIONSHIP NOR IMPLY AUTOMATIC CHINESE HEGEMONY. WE HAVE FOUND BASIS FOR COMMON INTEREST WITH DIFFICULT REGIMES ELSEWHERE; WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO SO IN ASIA.

8. CAN WE NOT ALSO ASSUME THAT NEITHER JAPAN, SOVIET UNION NOR HANOI WILL EASILY CONCEDE CHINESE HEGEMONY? IF WE CAN CONTINUE, THEREFORE, DEAL WITH INDEPENDENT STATES GOING THEIR OWN WAY, AND PRESERVE DEGREE OF FLEXIBLE DETACHMENT FROM IDENTITY WITH ANY OF SEVERAL COMPETING FORCES IN ASIA, WE WOULD SEEM STILL TO HAVE CHANCE PRESERVE OUR BASIC INTERESTS. AS LONG AS SUCH CHANCE EXISTS, IT STRIKES US AS AN UNDULY PESSIMISTIC CONCLUSION THAT WE SHOULD SEEK TO MAKE DEAL WITH CHINA.

9. WITH RESPECT INDONESIA ITSELF, THIS COUNTRY NOT AS SURE TO FAIL IN ITS DEVELOPMENT COURSE AS IS SUGGESTED IN PARA 5 REF A. WHILE MASSIVE PROBLEMS BOTH NATURAL (E.G. BIRTH RATE) AND CREATED (CORRUPTION) PLAGUE INDONESIA, MILITARY-LED GOI HAS CONSISTENTLY GIVEN PRIMACY TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, REMAINING NON-ALIGNED POLITICALLY WHILE OBTAINING MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID FROM US. GOI NEVER WAS OPTIMISTIC ON INDOCHINA AND TOLD US REPEATEDLY COLLAPSE WAS ONLY MATTER OF TIME. GIVEN THIS RECORD OF "CORRECT "SATURDAY-MORNING" QUARTERBACKING, I WOULD HESITATE TO WRITE OFF TOO QUICKLY THEIR
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QUARTERBACKING FOR THEIR OWN COUNTRY.

10. EVEN SHOULD INDONESIA FAIL AT PRESENT NON-ALIGNED PRAGMATIC, DEVELOPMENT COURSE, I DOUBT SERIOUSLY THAT SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT TO SUHARTO'S WOULD CHOOSE TO LOOK TO CHINA AS A PATTERN FOR EMULATION, MUCH LESS ENTER WILLINGLY INTO CHINA'S ORBIT. INDONESIANS FEAR AND DISLIKE CHINESE--WHO HERE AS IN MANY PLACES ARE RICH AND ENVIED MINORITY.

11. SO LONG AS THERE IS NOT OVERT MILITARY ATTACK, INDONESIANS UNDER ANY REGIME LIKELY SEEK MAINTAIN MAXIMUM FREEDOM OF MANEUVER, PLAYING PEKING OFF AGAINST MOSCOW, AND PRESERVING TO FULLEST EXTENT POSSIBLE BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH WESTERN WORLD. ADMITTEDLY, AS ISLAND

NATION INDONESIA WILL FIND IT EASIER TO PLAY THIS GAME
THAN ASIAN CONTINENTAL STATES.
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